

Message Text

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SUBJECT: WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE - AUGUST 19 OPENING
SESSION IN THE PLENARY

SUMMARY. CONFERENCE OPENED BY UNSYG WALDHEIM. ROMANIA'S MACOVESCU, FOREIGN MINISTER AND HEAD OF DELEGATION, ELECTED PRESIDENT OF WPC BY ACCLAMATION. SPEAKERS INCLUDED ROMANIA'S PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU, WALDHEIM, AND SYG OF WPC CARRILLO-FLORES. SPEECHS CONTAINED NO SURPRISES AND LITTLE NEW THOUGHT. CEAUSESCU ADHERED TO TRADITIONAL COMMUNIST POSITION ON POPULATION PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS. BOTH WALDHEIM AND CARRILLO-FLORES TRIED TO DIFFUSE ANTICIPATED CONTROVERSY OVER CONSUMPTION PATTERNS IN DC'S AND LDC'S AND KEEP DISCUSSIONS

CONFINED TO POPULATION ISSUES. PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES RECEIVED FROM FORD AND TITO. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU

DESCRIBED POPULATION AS ONF OF "FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS OF MANKIND'S FUTURE, OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION," AND OUTLINED SOCIAL, ECONOMIC
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AND POLITICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SOLUTION OF POPULATION PROBLEMS.

HE SAID POPULATION TRENDS MUST BE ANALYZED IN CONTEXT OF CONCRETE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF GIVEN COUNTRY, RATHER THAN ABSTRACTLY. SINCE CONDITIONS DIFFER, COUNTRIES MUST HAVE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO FORMULATE THEIR POPULATION POLICIES. EFFECTIVE SOLUTION OF POPULATION PROBLEMS REQUIRES:

TRUE EQUALITY AMONG NATIONS, INCLUDING ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF ALL STATES IN SOLVING MAJOR CONTEMPORARY ISSUES;

ELIMINATION OF DOMINANCE AND OPPRESSION; OF IMPERIALIST, COLONIALIST, AND NEOCOLONIALIST POLICIES OF EXPLOITATION;

LIQUIDATION OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT AND OF INEQUITIES IN LEVELS OF LIVING;

EXTINCTION OF ALL HOTBEDS OF HOSTILITIES, INCLUDING MIDDLE EAST, INDOCHINA AND CYPRUS;

REDUCTION IN MILITARY SPENDING,

PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU WAS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT MAN'S ABILITY TO PROVIDE, THROUGH SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, FOR GROWING POPULATIONS.

HE CALLED ON NATIONS TO STRENGTHEN NEW COURSE TOWARD DETENTE AND NOTED THAT EUROPE HAS A PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN IMPROVING INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL CLIMATE THROUGH "MULTILATERAL COOPERATION" BASED ON EQUALITY AND MUTUAL RESPECT. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE CALLED FOR EARLY CONVENING OF THE LAST ROUND OF THE ALL-EUROPE CONFERENCE.

PRES. CEAUSESCU ASSURED ROMANIA'S CONTINUED COOPERATION WITH ALL STATES, IRRESPECTIVE OF SOCIAL SYSTEM AND CALLED ON OTHER NATIONS TO DO SAME IN INTEREST OF LASTING AND JUST PEACE.

2. CARRILLO-FLORES, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE, BELIEVES THAT CONSENSUS ON WORLD POPULATION PLAN OF ACTION IS POSSIBLE DESPITE GREAT VARIETY OF SITUATIONS IN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES, BECAUSE ITS MOST IMPORTANT PROVISIONS HAVE THEIR OWN JUSTIFICATIONS FROM HUMAN VIEWPOINT. IN HIS VIEW, PLAN OF ACTION IS NO MORE THAN SYSTEMATIC PRESENTATION OF WAYS TO INFLUENCE POPULATION TRENDS. THIS CONFERENCE, HE BELIEVES, WILL BE MORE EFFECTIVE IF IT CAN APPROVE BY CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATIONS TO FACILITATE POLITICAL ACTION.

CARRILLO-FLORES ALSO STRESSED THAT THIS IS A POPULATION CONFERENCE RATHER THAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE. IT IS ALSO A FIRST POPULATION CONFERENCE OF POLITICAL NATURE. UN, IN HIS VIEW, TOOK UNCLASSIFIED

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A COURAGEOUS STEP IN CONVENING IT AND HE HOPES THAT IT WILL BE REMEMBERED AS ONE OF NOBLEST UN INITIATIVES.

HE BELIEVES THAT DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS ARE PASSING FROM AREA OF SCIENTIFIC SPECULATION TO THAT OF GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY, INCLUDING STATE'S DUTY TO INFORM, EDUCATE, AND PROVIDE SERVICES WHICH ENABLE PARENTS TO PLAN THEIR FAMILIES. BROADER POPULATION POLICIES ARE COMPONENTS OF DEVELOPMENTAL PLANS AND ARE A MATTER

FOR INTERNAL DECISIONS. INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SHOULD PROMOTE RESEARCH, THE KNOWLEDGE AND INTERPRETATION OF DEMOGRAPHIC REALITIES AND TO PROVIDE COOPERATION TO ALL WHO SEEK IT.

3. UNSG WALDHEIM SAID THIS CONFERENCE MARKS A TURNING POINT IN OUR ATTITUDES TOWARD POPULATION PROBLEMS WHICH INTRUDED THEMSELVES ON OUR ATTENTION, DEMANDING ACTION AND SOLUTIONS. HE VIEWS THE WPC AS ONE OF AN EXTENDED SERIES OF INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS WHICH, TAKEN TOGETHER, MAY DETERMINE THE COURSE TO BE TAKEN BY THE UN IN THE REMAINDER OF THIS CENTURY. WHILE EACH OF THESE MEETINGS EMPHASIZES SOME ASPECT OF THE INTERLOCKING SET OF PROBLEMS, MAY OF THESE PROBLEMS CANNOT BE SOLVED WITHOUT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT POPULATION FACTORS. MOREOVER, THE INTER-CONNECTED PROBLEMS ARE ASSUMING INCREASINGLY INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER, THUS GIVING RISE TO NEW AND COMPLEX DEMANDS ON UN.

WALDHEIM NOTED THAT RAPID POPULATION GROWTH TENDED TO UPSTAGE OTHER DEMOGRAPHIC PROBLEMS, BUT INDIVIDUAL NATIONS HAVE THEIR OWN CONCERNS. ALL THESE MATTERS WHICH GOVERNMENTS SHOULD EXAMINE WITH VIEW OF FORMULATING POLICIES THAT WILL BE APPROPRIATE TO EACH NATION'S NEEDS AND RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS.

HE REASSURED THE CONFERENCE THAT WORLD POPULATION PLAN OF ACTION RECOGNIZES PREROGATIVES OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND IS RESPECTFUL OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THE PLAN SUGGESTS THAT NATIONS MIGHT BE WELL SERVED BY TAKING POPULATION FACTORS INTO ACCOUNT IN THEIR ECONOMIC PLANNING AND BY FORMULATING EXPLICIT POPULATION POLICIES APPROPRIATE TO LOCAL NEEDS. WALDHEIM, LIKE CARRILLO-FLORES STRESSED THAT THIS IS POPULATION CONFERENCE AND THE PLAN IS THEREFORE LIMITED IN SCOPE.

WALDHEIM TOOK NOTE OF VOICES RAISED AGAINST PATTERNS OF HIGH CONSUMPTION IN INDUSTRIAL WORLD. HE SAID THAT WHILE THIS MUST NOT BECOME MAJOR FOCUS OF DISCUSSIONS AT CONFERENCE IT SHOULD SERVE TO REMIND US THAT (1) PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT NEED NOT BE THE SAME

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IN ALL PARTS OF WORLD, (2) OF OUR OBLIGATION TO SATISFY CERTAIN UNIVERSAL NEEDS FOR FOOD, SHELTER, ETC.

4. PRESIDENT FORD'S MESSAGE, DELIVERED FROM PODIUM BY SECRETARY WEINBERGER, WAS WELL RECEIVED AND WAS EFFECTIVE PUBLIC INTRODUCTION OF US DELEGATION.

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